

Application Number 09/643,729  
Amendment dated, September 13, 2004  
Reply to Office action of July 6, 2004

**R-E-M-A-R-K-S**

The Examiner states that claims 17 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in view of US Patent N°6,697,345 and further in view of US Patent N°6,249,516.

The Examiner states that claims 1-16 are allowed in view of the cited prior art.

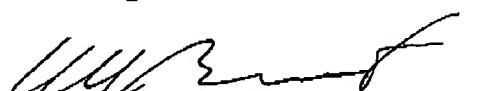
Accordingly, the Applicant has cancelled claims 17 and 18 without prejudice in order to expedite prosecution of this patent application.

In view of the foregoing, this patent application is now believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:



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**CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION**

I hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the Patent and Trademark Office on the date shown below.

C. MARC BENOÎT, Reg. No. 50,200  
Name of person signing certification

  
Signature

September 13, 2004

Date